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ABSTRACT

The need for and proficiency in 15 competencies as viewed by practicing teachers are examined, along with teacher perceptions of where the competencies were developed. Major elements for which responses were solicited were planning instruction, managing instruction, providing the learning environment, evaluation, and being a professional. Summary responses to the survey are presented in rank order of perceived need and compared to proficiency and source of competency. From the responses it was determined that: (1) little relationship existed between the perceived need and the extent of proficiency for that need; (2) rankings are consistent with other literature dealing with teacher needs; (3) the relationship of needs to proficiency in this study differs from other studies; (4) there is little relationship between perceived need of teachers and instruction at the undergraduate level; (5) proficiency obtained from teacher training institutions is in areas of low-ranked need; and (6) work experience and perceived need show some relationship. Relevance of the findings to undergraduate and inservice education are noted. (MJB)

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Development, Proficiency and Need of Teacher Competencies

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This study examines the need and proficiency of a selected set of teacher compentencies as viewed by practicing professionals. It also includes the views of these professionals as to where they developed these competencies - in undergraduate teacher institutions or from on the job experience.

This study was generated as a result of the Teacher Performance Assessment Instrument used to assess beginning teachers in the State of Georgia. The need of teacher institutions to examine proficiency in areas covered by this instrument becomes important as the evaluation of beginning teachers through the use of this instrument will be one of the major criteria for continued employment. The major areas of assessment as outlined by the instrument are: Planning Instrution, Managing Instruction, Providing the Learning Environment, Evaluating, and Being a professional (1978).

The competencies used in this study were generated by Bowling Green University to evaluate its teacher education graduates (1978). Fifteen competencies were selected from that list which represented areas of the Teacher Performance Assessment Instrument and are used as the basis for this study.

Procedures

Fifty-one teachers were administered the questionaire. The average years of teaching experience was 2.2 years. The sample included twenty-eight elementary teachers and twenty-three middle

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and secondary teachers from Richmond County, Augusta, Georgia. The sample represented twenty-nine undergraduate institutions located in eighteen states.

The teachers were asked to respond to all the competency statements in three ways: need for the competency, their proficiency in the competency area and where the proficiency was developed. Table 1 shows the response format of the questionaire.

Table 1

Teacher Questionaire Response Format

NEED - What is the extent to which this competency is needed by you in your classroom situation?

1. Not applicable
2. Not needed
3. Little
4. Moderate
5. Extensive

PROFICIENCY - What do you consider to be your proficiency concerning this competency?

1. Not proficient
2. Limited
3. Adequate
4. More than adequate
5. Extensive

WHERE DEVELOPED - Where do you feel this competency was developed?

1. Not developed
2. Developed at undergraduate teacher education institution
3. On the job work experience
4. Inservice
5. Independent study

Results

Table 2 lists the fifteen compentency statements used in this study. The competency statements are listed by rank. Rank was determined by the perception of need derived from responses on the questionaire

response sheet from most needed (1) to least needed (15). The ranks were derived from ordering the mean "scores" for the sample.

Table 2

TEACHER COMPETENCIES	NEED		PROFICIENCY		UNDERGRAD INSTITUTION		WORK EXPERIENCE	
	MEAN	RANK	MEAN	RANK	PER CENT	RANK	PER CENT	RANK
1. Ability to maintain order in a classroom and to assist students in the development of self-discipline.	4.039	1	3.392	8	0	15	87	1
2. Ability to motivate student achievement via modeling, reinforcement, provision of success experiences, and appeal to student interests.	3.941	2	3.313	11	24	11	58	3
3. Ability to individualize instruction to meet the varing needs of students, via techniques such as mastery learning, alternative assignments, individual contracting, and group work.	3.901	3	3.039	14	27	9.5	51	4.5
4. Ability to encourage and facillitate the development of social skills and enhanced self-concept.	3.882	4	3.352	9	27	9.5	51	4.5
5. Ability to apply evaluative techniques appropriate to the student and classroom situation.	3.843	5	3.333	10	49	2	37	10.5

TEACHER COMPETENCIES	NEED		PROFICIENCY		UNDERGRAD INSTITUTION		WORK EXPERIENCE	
	MEAN	RANK	MEAN	RANK	PER CENT	RANK	PER CENT	RANK
6. Ability to provide instruction leading to the different cognitive goals of acquisition, comprehensive, and application to knowledge.	3.823	6	3.823	1	45	3.5	37	10.5
7. Ability to construct performance/behavior objectives in your particular subject area.	3.764	7	3.411	7	66	1	25	15
8. Ability to continue the development and clarification of one's own philosophy of education.	3.686	8	3.431	6	39	5	38	9
9. Ability to utilize audiovisual equipment and materials in teaching.	3.647	9	3.450	5	37	6.5	34	12
10. Ability to prepare teacher-made tests.	3.627	10	3.666	2	45	3.5	45	7
11. Ability to interpret and report student performance on teacher-made tests.	3.607	11	3.627	3	37	6.5	47	6
12. Ability to interpret and report student performance on standardized tests.	3.588	12	3.470	4	35	8	31	14
13. Ability to utilize an understanding of the formal chain of control, decision making, communication, and authority within each school unit and their effects upon the daily operation of the classroom.	3.490	13	3.215	12	23	12	66	2

TEACHER COMPETENCIES	NEED		PROFICIENCY		UNDERGRAD INSTITUTION		WORK EXPERIENCE	
	MEAN	RANK	MEAN	RANK	PER CENT	RANK	PER CENT	RANK
14. Ability to apply the basic principles of how schools are financed, sources of income and major areas of expenditure, and how these factors directly affect classroom operation.	3.313	14	2.70	15	20	13	32	13
15. Ability to understand the role of teacher organizations with the formal and informal competition for control of education and one's own personal role in joining or not joining such organizations.	3.196	15	3.078	13	18	14	44	8

Rank order correlation - Need and Proficiency---------- .09
Rank order correlation - Need and Instructional Institution .04
Rank order correlation - Need and Work Experiences--------- .40

Information presented in Table 2 shows that the most needed competency was the "ability to maintain order in a classroom and to assist students in the development of self discipline." The mean score for this competency statement was 4.039 on a 5 point scale.

The sample group of teachers thought they were adequate in their proficiency of classroom management with a mean score of 3.392 and a proficiency rank of 8.

A Spearman Rho correlation between the two sets of ranks (needs and proficiency) was .09. This indicated that little relationship existed between the perceived need and the extent of proficiency for that need.

Interpretations of selected need-proficiency relationship as indicated by Table 2 illustrate this lack of relationship:

1. The teachers felt most efficient (ranked 1) in their ability to

provide instruction of cognitive goals, but considered this sixth in terms of need.

2. The ability to motivate students in term of needs ranked second, but ranked 11th in the area of proficiency.
3. The ability to individualize instruction ranked 3rd in need, but showed an extremely low level (14th) in perceived proficiency.
4. The ability to prepare teacher-made test ranked 10th in need, but had a proficiency rank of 2. This may indicate some overpreparation in this area of competency.

The rank of perceived needs are consistent with much of the literature available dealing with teacher needs. (Ingersoll, 1976) The relationship of needs to proficiency, however, differ from other studies conducted. Pigge found a .83 correlation coefficient between needs and proficiency (1978). This would indicate a high relationship factor between the two variables. However, the findings of this study (.09 relationship) would indicate that needs are perceived as a result of a lack of proficiency and would show either no relationship or a negative relationship.

Where the Competencies Were Developed

Table 2 also presents data related to the development of the aompetency statements.

Table 1 shows five possible responses to where they developed this competency. The respondant chould choose: (1) not developed, (2) developed at undergraduate teacher education institution, (3) on the job work experience, (4) inservice or, (5) independent study.

Percentages were used to determine rank of the two most chosen responses which were 2 and 3. Spearman Rho correlation showed a .04 relationship between need and undergraduate institution and a .40 relationship between need and work experience.

These coefficients would indicate the following:

1. There is little relationship between perceived need of teachers and the instruction at the undergraduate institution.
2. Teacher training institutions are obtaining proficiency from students in areas of need not highly ranked by teachers.
3. Work experience and perceived need shows some relationship, indicating that experience within the schools give the incentive for proficiency. This might indicate a lengthening of the internship (student teaching) experience to allow for more practice under actual teaching conditions.

Although not reported, there was an indication that inservice has not proven worthwhile to gain proficiency. This might indicate that teachers should be more involved in selecting topics for inservice to gain needed exercise in areas they perceive as high need competencies.

Summary

Although the study indicated that students at undergraduate institutions gained proficiency in less needed areas, it cannot be assumed that these institutions neglected entirely the high need areas. It would suggest, however, that undergraduate institutions become more aware of the needs indicated by teachers when in designing instructional curriculums. It would also suggest that field-based teacher education allow for more experiences in these high need areas.

This would involve more closely supervised observations and a closer relationship of the teacher institution and the field institution.

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